

# STATE OF ALASKA

Department of Education & Early Development

*Office of the Commissioner*

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Dear Fellow Alaskans:

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development has recognized the need to expand and improve our student standards in the core subjects of English language arts and mathematics. For the past two years, we have worked extensively with stakeholders statewide, from 56 communities rural and urban, to significantly increase our standards' rigor and to include all grades from kindergarten through high school.

We recognize the challenges that lie ahead for our students entering the workforce and the need to prepare them for that future. In an increasingly global economy, competition from around the country and the world for jobs even within Alaska has never been greater.

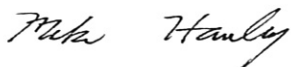
In recent years, universities and employers have increasingly expressed concern that too many of our graduates need remediation or do not have the requisite skills to enter the workforce. Alaska compares poorly to other states in national academic assessments. These new standards will set a trajectory of high expectations, providing our students the ability to meet challenges head on.

In developing these new standards, we used the expertise of 228 Alaskans and a consultant with national experience. Our goal was to develop Alaska standards that match or exceed the rigor of standards that are being adopted by states nationwide.

I am confident that these standards will prepare our students to be college ready and career ready. The standards set high expectations for students and for their futures. Districts and schools will continue to choose the best routes and strategies to meet students' needs and connect them to their learning. I look forward to seeing best practices modeled in a variety of strategies from immersion programs to theme-based approaches to traditional models.

The State Board of Education & Early Development has approved a period of public comment through May 12, 2012. During this period, we will disseminate the standards widely, hold meetings, and actively solicit comments. Your comments also can be given at [www.eed.state.ak.us/regs/](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/regs/). Thank you for your interest in Alaska's students.

Sincerely,



Mike Hanley  
Commissioner